

# The BUStop

**MAKING THE CONNECTION**  
*Special Edition...SAFETY*

## Safety First

All of us, as members of the BUS workforce, participated in the Lab-wide "stand down" to review all work practices in the BUS work environment on Tuesday, July 16, 1996. I want you to know that I'm committed to providing a safe work environment in BUS.

The watch words in BUS are "If it's not safe - don't do it." I truly mean this! There is nothing that we do that is so important that it has to be done in an unsafe manner.

I ask each of you to make "Safety First" your first priority in accomplishing your job responsibilities. Bring your safety concerns to the attention of your Team Leader/Group Leader. I will hold each supervisor in BUS accountable for providing a safe work environment. But I emphasize, as Director Sig Hecker did in his All Managers Meeting on July 17, 1996, that safety is "not just the responsibility of line managers but, also of each individual."

I've committed to providing a safe work environment in BUS but, in order to do so, I need your help. If after bringing your safety concerns to the attention of your Team Leader/Group Leader, the safety concern has not been corrected or on a schedule for correction in a reasonable time



period, please elevate your concern to me or Don Bryson.

*Allan F. Johnston, BUS Division Director*

## Office Safety Guidelines

Some of you may be interested in getting some help in taking a look at your workplace through the eyes of a safety professional. Well, rest assured, help is available, through the BUS ESH Specialist, Lorraine Segura. Your Group Leader and your group safety liaison can set up quarterly safety inspections of your workspace with the ESH Team. The Team will look for specific things in various areas of safety including electrical safety, structural safety, fire protection, housekeeping, and equipment safety to name a few. Have you looked in your area and asked the following questions:

- Do extension cords pose a tripping hazard?

- Does the main electrical source interfere with walking or sitting areas?
- Are you using defective or frayed cords?
- Are aisles and passageways kept clear of obstructions?
- Are the aisles and walkways wide enough?
- Is your fire extinguisher maintenance up to date?
- Are excess materials and furniture properly stored?
- Are unnecessary materials sent to salvage?
- Is your work area clean and orderly?
- Are storage cabinets properly labeled?
- Do you use a ladder to reach high files?
- Is a first aid kit accessible and correctly inventoried?

For a full "Office Safety Inspection Guide" or to set up quarterly safety evaluations, please contact Lorraine Segura at 7-1020. Ergonomic evaluations are also available through Rose Gonzales Nielsen, Industrial Hygienist (ESH-5) at 7-5147.

## Computer Safety

Most of us who have a computer and a printer probably don't perceive these items as potential safety hazards. However, since anything that "plugs in" has an electric supply,

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we thought that this would be a good time to look at the risks associated with computer use. Camilo Perez, Team Leader Micro Systems Support (BUS-7) tells us that “most of the risks have to do with power: faulty cables, inappropriate fat phoebe use, the overall way in which the wiring is laid out.” Here are some safety suggestions:

- Don’t use the fat phoebe as the on/off switch for the system. In order for the fat phoebe to do its job (that is, protect you and the equipment), the phoebe should be on before you turn any other systems.
- Don’t open up the PC or the monitor.
- If the paper jams in your printer, turn off the printer if you will need to have your hands inside the machine in a position where you will touch any heated element in the printer.
- Stay away from the power supply area of the computer and printer.
- Provide adequate clearance/space for the equipment (avoid jamming the wires against the wall and provide clearance for cooling purposes).
- Don’t chain fat phoebes together.
- Don’t have computer cables under your desk that are reachable by your feet.

Camilo stresses that you should be able to visually inspect the condition of the wiring of your computer before making any attempt to physically come in contact with computer cables. In other words, avoid reaching behind your computer or printer without having a clear view of what you are trying to handle. Anytime you are in doubt about whether you are in a safe situation

with regard to computer equipment in the workplace, please contact the BUS-7 Helpdesk at 5-0867 for assistance.

## It’s Up to You

I’ve been giving a lot of thought to safety lately, both here at work and at home. It seems so obvious to use common sense and good judgment in making decisions to do or not to do something. Why would anyone choose to put themselves at risk? Think about it. I always remind my little girl to stop, look and listen before she crosses the street. Drivers are taught to “drive defensively” and be aware of what is going on around them to avoid having an accident. So, why do we come to work and forget all the things we’ve learned about being safe?

As we all know by now, there have been several serious accidents over the past months which have caused the entire Laboratory to re-examine its safety management systems and practices. Allan Johnston and the management team have told us of their commitment to ensure a safe workplace for all of us. Both Sig Hecker and Allan Johnston have stated that no work should be performed unless it can be done safely.

The way I see it, the real key to our success here is individual commitment to putting safety first. If we just go on about our business without really considering risks in our everyday environment, then management isn’t to blame when something goes wrong. We each have the gift of common sense and should use it. Question any activity that

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doesn’t seem safe. Ask your manager or supervisor for assistance in determining whether your concern is valid and for the tools with which to fix the situation. Now is the time to let loose with your ideas, concerns, complaints. Take the time to look around your work area and identify things you think are safety issues for you. Maybe you don’t think you have any. Either way, you deserve a safe workplace - but it is your responsibility to help management ensure the safety of your area. Who knows what your concerns are better than you. The opportunity to make things better and safer is there for all of us, if we choose to bring issues to management’s attention and expect results.

*Provided by Jan Frensdorf, BUS-DO/QSO*

## Putting Safety First....A Final Note

In every Group Office there is a copy of the BUS Division Manual. Inside, you will find the BUS Safety Plan. This document is a useful tool worth looking at. In the meantime, if you have safety concerns and you don’t know who to ask for help, you may contact Lorraine Segura the BUS ESH Specialist or e-mail [BUSHLP@lanl.gov](mailto:BUSHLP@lanl.gov) and we will make sure it gets to the correct person.

